

MINUTES OF THE  
EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING HELD ON JUNE 17, 2015  
(Approved July 15, 2015)

The Planning Commission held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 17, 2015. Present for the meeting were Walter Woessner, Kathryn Alexis, Lawrence Tietjen and Jason McConnell. Absent was Lance Parson. Also present for the meeting was Marjorie Brown, Planning Commission Solicitor.

Also present was Mariea Geho, Vice Chair of the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Woessner called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the pledge was recited.

**MINUTES**

Mr. Woessner moved to approve the second draft of minutes of the April 13, 2015 monthly meeting minutes. Mr. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 2-0-2 vote.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

**SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**

There were no subdivision or land developments to discuss.

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

**Ordinance No 2015- "Miscellaneous Streets and Sidewalks, Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Ordinance Amendments"**

Ms. Brown stated the amendment is a collection of proposed changes in the SALDO and Zoning Ordinance assembled over the last two (2) years. Ms. Brown discussed the changes proposed in detail.

- Section 1 – Chapter 21, Part 3, Exhibit 21-3-A, Table of Contents – Proposed change is to delete the reference to: “6.1 Material.....6-1” specifications pertaining to bicycle paths in the SALDO.
- Section 2 – Chapter 21, Part 3, Exhibit 21-3-A, Section 6 – Proposed change is same as Section 1.
- Section 3 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definitions for “Recreation, Active”, “Steep Slope” and “Stormwater Management Basin Easement” – Proposed change is to delete the existing definitions in their entirety and replace them with the following:
  - Recreation, Active – This change accomplishes 3 things
    - A) Average slope –deletes “average” requirement;
    - B) Slope must be 5% or less;
    - C) Deletes requirement that the land cannot be in the 100 year flood plain.
  - Steep Slope – Proposed changes add new language.
  - Stormwater Management Basin Easement – Proposed change clears up the difference in the definitions between the SALDO and the Zoning Ordinance. ARRO Consulting recommends the proposed change be according to Section 174 of the Stormwater Management Ordinance [Chapter 9]. Mr. Woessner questioned the section of “up to fifty percent (50%) of the area of the stormwater detention/retention basins designated to provide for park and/or recreation uses may be considered as active recreation area”. After some discussion from the Commission, the suggestion is to remove the sentence from the definition of active recreation.

- Section 4 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Lot Area, Net” – Proposed change is to delete subsections D and E in the Net Lot Area entirely and add new subsections D and E in their place.
  - Subsection D – All area associated with a Stormwater Management Basin, including easement area required by Section 174 of the Stormwater Management Ordinance [Chapter 9].
  - Subsection E – Sanitary sewer easement area is not in current definition.
- Section 5 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Slope” – Proposed change is to clarify the language of a slope.
- Section 6 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Steep Slope Precautionary” – Proposed change is to delete “in the aggregate”.
- Section 7 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Steep Slope Prohibitive” – Proposed change is to delete “in the aggregate”.
- Section 8 – Chapter 22, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Stormwater Management Ordinances” – Proposed change is to delete October 6, 2000 and add December 9, 2013 in its place.
- Section 9 – Chapter 22, Part 3, Section 304, Subsection 3, Paragraph E, Subparagraph (19) – Proposed change is to add “and recycling” after the word “refuse”.
- Section 10 – Chapter 22, Part 4, Section 426, Subsection 2, Paragraph A, Subparagraph (1) – Proposed change is to delete duplicate reference.
- Section 11 – Chapter 22, Part 4, Section 426, Subsection 3, Paragraph B – Proposed change is to delete “three percent (3%)” and add “five percent (5%)” in its place.
- Section 12 – Chapter 22, Part 4, Section 427, Subsection 4, Paragraph B – Proposed change is to delete “0.4 Min” and add “0.4 Avg” in its place.
- Section 13 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition of “Barn”, “Garage”, “Home Occupation”, “Major Home Occupation”, “Minor Home Occupation”, “Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan”, “Parking Lot”, “Recreation, Active”, “Steep Slope” and “Yard, Side” – Proposed change is to delete the existing definitions and replace with new definitions.
  - Barn – Ms. Brown stated the suggestion was to remove the weight requirement. A discussion ensued on the recommended definition of a barn. After a lengthy discussion, the Commission came up with a definition for a barn similar to the following: – “A structure designed to shelter farm products, equipment and livestock”. The Commission decided to remove “poultry” and “other animals”.
  - Day Care Home – Ms. Brown stated this came up as a zoning question. Ms. Brown explained that Day Care Center is defined, but there is not really a definition for Day Care Home. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has regulations and definitions for both concepts. Ms. Brown used the Pennsylvania definitions to create a new term Day Care Home that is consistent with the state codes. The State Regulations state more than 6 children is a “center”. A discussion ensued on whether a Day Care Home can only be in a single-family detached dwelling. The State Regulations show Day Care Home is defined as having 4, 5 or 6 children. The Commission decided to change the “up to 6 children” to “4, 5 or 6” and delete the “single-family detached”, assuming the state regulations have no restrictions. Ms. Brown to double check state regulations.
  - Garage – The suggestion is to remove the square footage requirement from the ordinance. The Commission proposed the limitation on permitted uses of the garage be revised. A discussion ensued on whether the height requirements should be included in the definition. After much discussion, the Commission proposed the following language:

- Garage – an accessory building, used for the storage of motor vehicles, not exceeding a gross vehicle weight which would require for its operation a commercial driver’s license, and/or for the storage of materials and equipment owned and used by the owner or tenant of the premises.”
  - Home Occupation – Ms. Brown stated the distinction between “major” and “minor” home occupations is not used in the Zoning Ordinance, so it is recommended the distinction be removed from the definitions. Mr. Woessner stated we should revise “for profit by persons residing on” to “for profit or non profit by persons residing on”.
  - Parking Lot – Ms. Brown stated this revision is designed to include the driveway, only if it is servicing the parking lot. Mr. Woessner stated this covers his comments on a plan review, referring to the distance from a driveway to an intersection.
  - Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan – Ms. Brown stated the definition did not get updated in the Zoning Ordinance when the SALDO definition was changed.
  - Recreation, Active – Ms. Brown stated this change is the same as the SALDO. (See Section 3) Mr. Woessner would like the following sentence changed. “Examples of active recreation area include, but are not limited to, playgrounds, ball courts and swimming pool” changed to “Examples of active recreation area include, but are not limited to, playgrounds, ball courts and fields and swimming pools”.
  - Steep Slope – Ms. Brown stated this change is the same as the SALDO. (See Section 3)
  - Yard, Side – Ms. Brown explained the issue with the definition of a Side Yard. A discussion ensued. Mr. Woessner pointed out Appendix B in the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Woessner suggested we do away with Appendix B. After more discussion, the Commission decided to keep Appendix B and not revise the existing definition of Yard, Side in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Section 14 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition of Day Care Home – Proposed change is to clean up the language.
- Section 15 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Dwelling Types” – Proposed change is to delete the word “condominiums” from the dwelling type.
- Section 16 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Lot Area, Net” – Proposed change is the same as the SALDO.
- Section 17 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Slope” – Proposed change is the same as the SALDO. (See Section 5)
- Section 18 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Steep Slope, Precautionary” – Proposed change is the same as the SALDO. (See Section 5)
- Section 19 – Chapter 27, Part 2, Section 202, Definition for “Steep Slope, Prohibitive” – Proposed change is the same as the SALDO and to correct the section typo.
- Section 20 – Chapter 27, Part 7, Section 704, Subsection B – Proposed change is to delete the existing title and add a new title for Section B as “Open Space, Density, Area, Bulk and Dimensional Standards”.
- Section 21 – Chapter 27, Part 7, Section 704, Subsection B – Proposed change is to add new paragraph (10) consistent with what was done for the Open Space Option in Section 807.
- Section 22 – Chapter 27, Part 8, Section 803, Subsection 2, Paragraph B – Proposed change is to clarify that table references are to lots rather than units.
- Section 23 – Chapter 27, Part 8, Section 804, Subsection B – Proposed change is to add a new Paragraph (10) consistent with what was done for the Open Space Option in Section 807 and Section 704.
- Section 24 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 1, Paragraph C – Proposed change is to delete the existing paragraph and add new paragraph C that expands the permitted use to include outdoor seating for up to 25% of the total seating capacity of the business

establishment without the need for conditional use approval. However, outdoor counter service, curb service or drive-thru food services would not be permitted by right because of the traffic and parking issues that arise, making it more appropriate that they be evaluated on a case by case basis.

- Section 25 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 2, Paragraph C – Proposed change is to delete the paragraph in its entirety.
- Section 26 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 3 – Proposed change is to require that outdoor seating in excess of 25% of the total seating capacity of the business establishment be subject to approval. After some discussion, the Commission proposed it be subject to conditional use approval.
- Section 27 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 4 – Proposed change is to expand the types of uses that are permitted by right in the NC Neighborhood Commercial and the C Commercial zoning districts. The following uses were proposed to be permitted by right:
  - **C Commercial District Uses Permitted by Right.** A building or other structure may be erected or used and a lot may be used or occupied, by right for any of the following purposes:
    - “A. Any use permitted, by right, in the NC Neighborhood Commercial District.”
    - “B. Club, lodge, fraternal organization, health spa, place of worship, studio.”
    - “C. Passenger station for public transportation; utility substations; and public utility facility, including telephone central office.”
    - “D. Indoor theater, bowling lanes or other place of indoor recreation such as handball courts, racquetball courts, indoor tennis courts, health and fitness spas, and a facility such as a gymnasium. All other types of indoor recreation shall be permitted only as a special exception.” Mr. Woessner suggested the Commission add “indoor Hockey field” also.
    - “E. Automotive service and repairs; garages; sales agency for new automobiles including used car sales as an accessory use; used car lot without new car sales agency; automatic car wash facilities subject to the provision of a public water supply and the provision of water recycling facilities; and service station subject to the requirements of subsection (3)(A) herein.”
    - “F. Wholesale establishments, lumber yard, building and plumbing supplies, farm machinery sales, warehousing for indoor storage only, and trucking incidental to such uses; provided, however, that truck terminals and exterior storage of truck terminals and exterior storage of trucking vehicles or trailers shall not be permitted.”
    - “G. Newspaper printing, florist shop, greenhouse; convenience store.”
    - “H. Any general retail sales outlet, commercial use or personal service facility (except that adult book stores and adult only movie facilities, as defined in §202 under “adult-oriented use,” are prohibited); a shopping center with frontage on an arterial or major collector street.”
    - “I. Hotel or motel, including dining and general meeting room facilities; bed and breakfast.”
    - “J. Animal hospital without outside kennels; undertaking establishment; self-service or hand laundry or cleaning establishment.”
    - “K. Retail sale of landscape, hardscape and lawn materials, supplies and services; winter maintenance supplies and services including, but not limited to, snow removal services.” This item is brand new to this section.
- Section 28 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 5 – Proposed change is to delete the subsection in its entirety and add the following subsection in its place:

- “Paragraph 5. **C Commercial District Conditional Uses.** A building or other structure may be erected or used and a lot may be used or occupied when authorized as a conditional use for any of the following purposes:”
  - “A. Any use permitted as a conditional use in the NC Neighborhood Commercial District may also be permitted in the C Commercial District as a conditional use.”
- Section 29 – Chapter 27, Part 9, Section 902, Subsection 6 – Proposed change is to add a new Paragraph B, as follows:
  - “B. Any use of a similar type and character to the uses permitted by right in the C Commercial District, as described in Subsection 4 above, shall be permitted as a special exception.” The Commission suggested “special exception” be changed to “conditional use.”

The Commission decided to continue the review of this ordinance at the next monthly meeting, along with the Transmission Pipeline – Model Ordinance in July due to time restraints.

Mr. Woessner suggested the Commission needs to think about parking for open space. Ms. Brown stated there are two (2) concepts to think of, one concept is that parking spaces be related to acreage and the other was based upon use. Mr. Flaharty thought if you use it for field purposes, you may want to have x amount of spaces per field. Mr. Woessner stated that would depend on what it is to be used for. Mrs. Alexis stated you have to define whether you are talking about open space or active open space. Ms. Brown suggested talking to Mr. Tralies to see if there is an equation that can be used. Mrs. Geho stated that there is a parking issue on 88 Wells Road when all the parking spaces are taken up. People park along the road. Mrs. Alexis stated there have to be some guidelines that can be used.

#### Northern Federation Update

Mrs. Geho provided an update from the Northern Federation Meeting. Mrs. Geho stated there were some people in for discussions, but there was nothing to report. Mrs. Alexis stated the Northern Federation is not meeting in the summer.

#### Historical Commission Update

Mrs. Geho provided an update on the Historical Commission Meeting. Mrs. Geho picked up Mrs. Snyder for the meeting. Mrs. Snyder donated some items to the Historical Commission. Mrs. Geho stated she made a shawl that was given to Mrs. Snyder by the Historical Commission.

#### Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee

Mr. Woessner stated the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors last week.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Alexis moved to adjourn the monthly meeting at 9:39 p.m. Mr. Tietjen seconded the motion. The motion carried with a 4-0-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A Imes  
Secretary